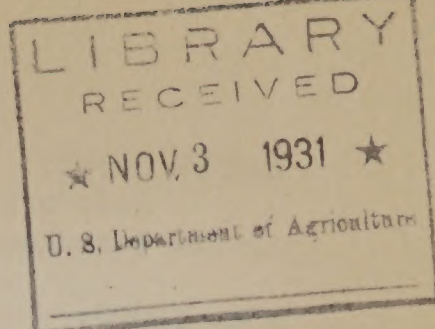


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MEETING - PROGRESSIVE GARDEN CLUB

A radio discussion by members of the Progressive Garden Club, W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, presiding, delivered through WRC and 45 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, Tuesday, October 27, 1931.

ANNOUNCER:

Another month has rolled around and the Progressive Garden Club is holding its October meeting today. "Keeping up Appearances," is the topic selected by the members of the club for their discussion. I take it that they refer to keeping up the appearances of their home surroundings. Let's tune in on their meeting and see what they have to say.

AUNT POLLY:

Betty! What a pretty dress you have on. It's so simple and becoming. Where did you get it?

BETTY BROWN:

Do you like it? I made it at school. We make a dress as a part of our domestic art work, and mother found the dearest little hat that just matches my dress.

MRS. BROWN:

Betty always did show good taste in clothes, and she certainly does believe in keeping up appearances.

CHAIRMAN:

"Keeping up appearances," why, that's what we are going to talk about in our meeting today, only we intend to consider the appearance of our homes and their surroundings rather than our clothes. You see during the summer, Nature covers up a lot of the defects with leaves and flowers, but after Jack Frost gets in his work everything about the place looks kind of shabby, and we need to give the home surroundings a general clean-up.

MRS. BROWN:

Yes, and I have a lot of things I want Mr. Brown to do around the place before cold weather. The front steps need repairing and the porch floors repainting; the garden gate is off its hinges; several pickets are loose on the garden fence - - - then I want a new trellis built for my climbing roses; several shrubs moved; the hedge pruned, and the lawn trimmed up a bit.

(over)

FARMER BROWN:

Wait a minute, Mary ---- if I do everything that you want done around the place this fall, I won't have a chance to go hunting.

MRS. BROWN:

Hunting! I've no objection to your going hunting, but I do want the work done around the house first.

CHAIRMAN:

Hold on now, we don't want a family argument right here, and I think we can arrange so that you can get things all fixed up around the place, and Mr. Brown still have time to do a little hunting.

FARMER BROWN:

To hear Mary talk, you would naturally think that I am as bad as old Jake Grimes who lived near where I did down in Tennessee. Jake kept his carts and wagons and his plows and harrows right in the front yard, and he hung his mule harness on the front gallery. 'Peared just like old Jake didn't care a rap about the appearance of his place. But his wife always had a few beds of flowers about the door, that is, provided stray hogs didn't get in and root them out.

AUNT POLLY:

I've seen places just like that, but you know that Mr. and Mrs. Brown's home always looks nice with its big lawn, trees, and shrubbery.

CHAIRMAN:

Now, let's see ----- what does really need doing around our homes at this time of the year? As Mrs. Brown has said, there are a lot of little things that need attention. Fences and gates often get out of repair, and right now is a good time to repair them, as most of us will be too busy for that kind of work next spring. What is it, Mrs. Brown?

MRS. BROWN:

I would like to ask about moving shrubs, --- shall I move them this fall, or wait until next spring?

CHAIRMAN:

Well folks, Mr. F. L. Mulford, Landscape Specialist of the Department of Agriculture, is with us today, and I'm going to ask him to answer Mrs. Brown's question. Would you advise moving the shrubs this fall, Mr. Mulford?

MR. MULFORD:

Well,--- that depends somewhat upon where you are located. In sections where the winters are severe, I would not advise moving the shrubs until spring. Where the winters are mild, you can move them either this fall or early next spring. In the South move them at any time during the winter when the soil is in good condition to work. It is now too late to move evergreens in the northern sections, so let transplanting them go over until next spring about the time growth starts.

FARMER BROWN:

Now Mr. Mulford, would you advise placing a mulch over the soil around the shrubs this fall?

MR. MULFORD:

Yes indeed! A mulch of compost or some material that will hold the moisture and protect the roots is very desirable, --- especially in sections where drying winds blow during the winter.

MRS. BROWN:

How about protecting shrubs and roses from cold, Mr. Mulford?

MR. MULFORD:

In the colder climates, shrubs and roses need protection. Of course, you plant only shrubs and roses that are hardy under your local conditions. In some cases, you will have to protect tender shrubs by mounding the soil about them, or by placing boxes around them and packing the plants in dry leaves, then covering to keep out the rain. It's often desirable to protect evergreens from being crushed by heavy snows and ice.

FARMER BROWN:

Well, that's one thing we folks down South don't have to worry about. But, in some of the central and northeastern States, sleet storms often damage shade trees, shrubs and evergreens.

CHAIRMAN:

Going back to that matter of mulching plants in the fall, I would like to ask Mr. Mulford if he thinks it desirable to mulch perennials --- hollyhocks, foxglove, delphiniums, and the like.

MRS. BROWN:

Yes, I'm interested in that.

MR. MULFORD:

Well, --- in cold regions hardy perennials do better if given a winter mulch. Wait until the ground freezes before you apply the mulch, because the frost in the ground will help to maintain uniform conditions during the winter. Besides, if you put the mulch on too early, it's likely to harbor mice.

BETTY BROWN:

How about a blanket of snow as a protection for perennials, Mr. Mulford?

MR. MULFORD:

Yes, a blanket of snow is all right where you can depend upon it. It's a good idea to put on a light covering of litter to catch and hold the early snows, but don't put it on until after the ground freezes.

AUNT POLLY:

How thick do you make the mulch for perennials, Mr. Mulford?

(over)

MR. MULFORD:

Don't apply winter mulch too thickly to plants having fleshy leaves that stay green all winter, for these will rot if deeply covered. Leave the old tops of the plants on them during the winter, and do the cleaning up in the spring. For example, leave the old stems on the peonies until spring, and don't place mulch directly over the hearts of the plants.

CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Mulford, do you advise pruning shade trees at this time of the year?

MR. MULFORD:

No, only for the removal of dead branches, or where the branches are in the way.

CHAIRMAN:

How about the fall pruning of shrubs?

MR. MULFORD:

At this time cut off any branches that are interfering with walks or drives, or with other plants. Remember, do not prune spring-blooming shrubs until after they blossom.

FARMER BROWN:

Would you prune cone-bearing evergreens at this time of the year?

MR. MULFORD:

No, don't prune or shear the cone-bearing evergreens, pines, cedars, arbor vitae, etc., until about the time growth starts in the spring.

MRS. BROWN:

Do you prune roses in the fall, Mr. Mulford?

MR. MULFORD:

Yes, in the fall, I'd cut back tea roses, hybrid tea roses and hybrid perpetual roses sufficiently to prevent the wind whipping them about during the winter. This would mean about 15 to 20 inches high for the tea and hybrid tea roses, and 2 to 3 feet for the hybrid perpetuals. In the spring take out half of the remaining wood. Many rose growers prefer to prune partly in the fall, then finish the job in the spring about the time the buds start.

AUNT POLLY:

Mr. Mulford, should I prune my climbing roses now?

MR. MULFORD:

No, at least, not to any extent. Climbing roses are like spring-flowering shrubs, and should be given their major pruning right after they bloom. You can head back any long or ungainly branches this fall, but no severe pruning should be done until after they bloom. Tie the branches of climbing roses securely to their supports this fall.

CHAIRMAN:

Another important point in keeping up the appearance of the home is the care of walks and driveways.

FARMER BROWN:

Yes, that's mighty important. You want good looking walks and drives, and walks and drives that will keep you out of the mud. I'd like to ask Mr. Mulford what he considers the best material for walks and drives about the home.

MR. MULFORD:

Concrete is undoubtedly the most durable, but is difficult to harmonize with the surroundings. A good grade of gravel or finely crushed rock make an attractive drive or walk, however, these materials do not hold up as well as concrete. The material to use will depend largely upon what is available, and the price. The way you maintain a walk or drive has a lot to do with its appearance.

MRS. BROWN:

I'd like to know what to do with flower beds in the fall after the frost kills the flowers.

MR. MULFORD:

Remove the dead plants, Mrs. Brown, and rake the surface clean and smooth. It is also a good plan to give the beds a top-dressing of compost.

BETTY BROWN:

I can tell you what I did with my flower garden after the frost killed my zinnias and other annuals.

CHAIRMAN:

What did you do, Betty?

BETTY BROWN:

I planted pansies. You see, there were a lot of nice pansy plants came up where I had my pansy bed last year, then Daddy bought me about a hundred plants, so I had enough for two large beds.

CHAIRMAN:

Don't you have to cover your pansy plants to keep them warm during the winter?

BETTY BROWN:

No, not here in our climate, but I do mulch the plants. Sometimes, we cover the plants with pine boughs, but it's really surprising how much cold those little pansy plants will stand.

CHAIRMAN:

Let me see, Betty, - - if I remember correctly, you had what you called your ten-cent flower garden last summer?

(over)

BETTY BROWN:

Yes, I did, --- there were ten kinds of flowers in that collection, all for ten cents. I took first premium on my zinnias at the fair, and you should have seen my cockscomb --- some of the heads were a foot across.

CHAIRMAN:

And, Jack Frost killed all of your flowers?

BETTY BROWN:

Yes, and then Daddy cleaned off the beds, and we planted my pansies.

FARMER BROWN:

Speaking of cleaning off flower beds reminds me that I'm just waiting for a chance to get at that old vegetable garden of mine, and clean up the bean poles, cut off and burn the dead asparagus tops, clean out the weeds along the fence, tie up the raspberry and dewberry canes, and then put on a good coating of barn-lot fertilizer.

CHAIRMAN:

That's a good idea, Mr. Brown, and nothing will so improve the looks of a place as to have the garden all cleaned up before winter.

MRS. BROWN:

I just couldn't stand for our place going without its fall clean-up. You see, we keep it in pretty good shape throughout the season, but after Mr. Brown gets his fall farm work done, we clean up the whole place. We call it our fall reckoning. Sometimes, it takes us two or three days to do it, especially if we have any repairs or painting.

FARMER BROWN:

I do most of my clean-up work in the barn and toolshed on rainy days, in fact, I calculate to keep the farm buildings in pretty good shape all the time.

CHAIRMAN:

By the way, there is another kind of clean-up that we shouldn't neglect at this time of the year, and that is to remove fire hazards. Inspect chimneys that have not been in use during the summer; clean and repair stoves and furnaces before you start them for the winter, and above all, dispose of any paper or trash that has accumulated in the cellar or elsewhere about the place.

FARMER BROWN:

Yes, I knew of a man who let a lot of leaves collect under his tool house, and one day somebody burned some trash in the yard nearby and didn't stop to see that the fire was all out. Well sir, along in the night the wind blew sparks under that tool house and set the leaves on fire and when the family awoke the tool house with most of the farm machinery and an automobile were a mass of flames. The barn and the house came near going too, and if the wind hadn't changed they would have gone.

CHAIRMAN:

I knew of a case where a fine young orchard was ruined by fire running through it. A clean-up would not only have improved the appearance of that orchard, but would have saved it from burning.

MRS. BROWN:

I wish somebody would tell me how to stop careless people throwing papers and trash on the public highway in front of our house. I work hard to keep our place looking nice, and it peeves me to have some thoughtless person litter the roadside and our lawn with empty lunch boxes and papers.

CHAIRMAN:

Most States have laws prohibiting the dumping of trash along the highways, but many persons are just thoughtless while others don't care and should be taught a lesson. Well folks, that clock over there warns me that our time is about up.

FARMER BROWN:

Before we adjourn, Mrs. Brown and I want to invite the members of the Club to meet at our house next time. The last Tuesday in November will be just two days before Thanksgiving, and we thought it would be nice if you would all come out to our place for the meeting.

CHAIRMAN:

We certainly shall be glad to accept Mr. and Mrs. Brown's invitation to meet at their house. Let me suggest that you all bring something to help fill about a dozen baskets with food and clothing for needy families in the country. I know of several homes where there won't be much cause for thanksgiving unless people who have plenty give liberally. Let's do our part. Until the 24th of November, the Progressive Garden Club will stand adjourned.

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ANNOUNCER:

That, ladies and gentlemen of the Farm and Home Hour audience, brings to a close today's program of the Progressive Garden Club. Mr. and Mrs. Brown have invited the members to meet at their home on the last Tuesday of November, two days before Thanksgiving, and so we will all look forward to a good time with the Browns next meeting. Those taking part in today's program were, Mr. W. R. Beattie, as Chairman, Mr. Frank L. Teuton, as Farmer Brown, Miss Norma L. Hughes, as Mrs. Brown, Miss Patricia Beattie as Betty Brown, Miss Rose Glaspey, as Aunt Polly, and Mr. Furman Lloyd Mulford, as guest of the Club.

